

5 WIDE AREA PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION
AND GAME INFORMATION COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

RELATED APPLICATION DATA

[0001] The present application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application
No. 60/266,427 for WIDE AREA PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION AND GAME

10 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION SYSTEM filed on February 2, 2001, the entire
disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to gaming networks including gaming machines such as
15 video slot machines and video poker machines. More specifically, the present invention
provides methods and apparatus for distributing gaming applications and related information
over a wide area network such as, for example, the Internet or World Wide Web.

[0003] Typically, a master gaming controller in a gaming machine controls various
combinations of devices that allow a player to play a game on the gaming machine and
20 encourage game play on the gaming machine. For example, a game played on a gaming
machine usually requires a player to input money or indicia of credit into the gaming
machine, indicate a wager amount, and initiate a game play. These steps require the gaming
machine to control input devices, including bill validators and coin acceptors, to accept
money into the gaming machine and recognize user inputs from devices, including touch
25 screens and button pads, to determine the wager amount and initiate game play. After game